A M E N D M E N T

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1, 7, 13, 18, 22, and 23 so that the claims read as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of deskewing parallel data streams, comprising:

receiving a plurality of data streams;

storing each of the received data streams in a respective buffer;

detecting synchronization signals in the data streams; and

controlling the buffers to read out the stored data streams on the basis of the detected synchronization signals,

wherein a portion of the synchronization signals in the data streams may be suppressed and wherein a timer is used to determine a particular synchronization signal has been suppressed.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of data streams consists of two data streams.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the detecting step includes reading synchronization signals in the data streams stored in the buffers.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the controlling step includes controlling respective read pointers of the buffers to simultaneously point at synchronization signals stored in the buffers.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein each of the data streams is received via a respective receiver port.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein each of the data streams is received via a respective optical fiber.

7. (Currently Amended) A method of deskewing parallel data streams, comprising:

receiving a plurality of data streams;

storing each of the received data streams in a respective buffer;

comparing respective timings of the received data streams; and

controlling read pointers of the buffers on the basis of a result of the comparing step,

wherein information indicative of the respective timings of the data streams may be suppressed and wherein a timer is used to determine that information indicative of the respective timings has been suppressed.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the comparing step includes reading synchronization signals from the data streams stored in the buffers.

9. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the plurality of data streams consists of two data streams.

10. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein each of the data streams is received via a respective receiver port.

11. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein each of the data streams is received via a respective optical fiber.

12. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the controlling step includes controlling respective read pointers of the buffers to simultaneously point at synchronization signals stored in the buffers.

13. (Currently Amended) An apparatus adapted to deskew parallel data streams, comprising:

a first port adapted to receive a first data stream;

a second port adapted to receive a second data stream;

a first buffer coupled to the first port and adapted to store the received first data stream;

a second buffer coupled to the second port and adapted to store the received second data stream; and

a deskew circuit coupled to the first and second buffers and operative to:

detect synchronization signals in the first and second data streams; and

control the first and second buffers to read out the stored first and second data streams on the basis of the detected synchronization signals,

wherein a portion of the synchronization signals in the data streams may be suppressed and wherein a timer is used to determine a particular synchronization signal has been suppressed.

14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the deskew circuit detects the synchronization signals by reading the synchronization signals in the first and second data streams respectively stored in the first and second buffers.

15. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the first buffer, the second buffer and the deskew circuit are implemented in a programmable logic device or an application specific integrated circuit.

16. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the first port is coupled to a first optical fiber and the second port is coupled to a second optical fiber.

17. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the deskew circuit controls respective read pointers of the first and second buffers to simultaneously point at synchronization signals stored in the first and second buffers.

18. (Currently Amended) An apparatus adapted to deskewing parallel data streams, comprising:

a first port adapted to receive a first data stream;

a second port adapted to receive a second data stream;

a first buffer coupled to the first port and adapted to store the received first data stream;

a second buffer coupled to the second port and adapted to store the received second data stream; and

a deskew circuit coupled to the first and second buffers and operative to:

compare respective timings of the received first and second data streams; and

control read pointers of the buffers on the basis of a result of the comparison of the respective timings of the received first and second data streams,

wherein information indicative of the respective timings of the data streams may be suppressed and wherein a

timer is used to determine that information indicative of the respective timings has been suppressed.

19. (Original) The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the first buffer, the second buffer and the deskew circuit are implemented in a programmable logic device or an application specific integrated circuit.

20. (Original) The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the first port is coupled to a first optical fiber and the second port is coupled to a second optical fiber.

21. (Original) The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the deskew circuit controls respective read pointers of the first and second buffers to simultaneously point at synchronization signals stored in the first and second buffers.

22. (Currently Amended) A method of deskewing parallel data streams, comprising:

providing a pair of buffers, each for storing a respective one of the data streams;

reading out respective signals from at least one of the pair of buffers;

determining that one of the signals read out from one of the buffers is a synchronization signal; and

responsive to the determining step, holding a read pointer of the one of the buffers from which the synchronization signal was read out until a synchronization signal is read out from the other one of the buffers,

wherein a portion of the synchronization signals in the data streams may be suppressed and wherein a timer is used

to determine a particular synchronization signal has been suppressed.

23. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for deskewing parallel data streams, comprising:

a first port for receiving a first data stream;

a second port for receiving a second data stream;

a first buffer coupled to the first port for storing the received first data stream;

a second buffer coupled to the second port for storing the received second data stream; and

a deskew circuit coupled to the first and second buffers and operative to:

read out respective signals from at least one of the first and second buffers;

make a determination that one of the signals read out from one of the buffers is a synchronization signal; and

respond to the determination by holding a read pointer of the one of the buffers from which the synchronization signal was read out until a synchronization signal is read out from the other one of the buffers,

wherein a portion of the synchronization signals in the data streams may be suppressed and wherein a timer is used to determine a particular synchronization signal has been suppressed.